

memory, the flash of recollection, that can
alone make the
dead years give up their dead. We cannot
conjure this
Spirit of the Past. We can only watch and
pray for his
coming. His chosen instruments are the
humblest and
most unexpected things—the smell of
burning leaves, or
the sight of a book unopened since
childhood, or the
sough of wind in grass that suddenly floods
the meadows
with the remembered murmur of the
waves. A mere un-
evenness in the flags of a Paris pavement can
raise suddenly
the vision of Venice (with a beauty the
physical reality
never knew), like another Venus, from the
sea. It is when
these moments of revelation are vouchsafed
us that we
find again the days Time has taken from us,
and rise above
his power. "Every Paradise is a Paradise
Lost/ But now
we see what we have lost with the pure eyes
of the artist.
We imagine, now, without desiring to possess;
we possess
without destroying the magic of the
imagination. We
have found the rainbow's foot. For these
images suddenly
unlocked from their cells within ourselves
are 'reels
sans etre actuels, ideaux sans etre
abstraits*. What was
once a prosaic caterpillar springs now from
its forgotten
chrysalis as Psyche's butterfly. Memory and
Art are at
one—

In that high vision where the heart at rest
Beholds itself at last possess the unpossessed

Art can immortalise what Memory reveals
only like a
lightning-flash; but these are the two gates
of Reality.

So life became for Proust an alternation of
experience
and suffering with recollection and analysis.
*Ce sont nos
passions qui esquissent nos livres, le repos
d'intervalle qui
les écrit.' And even if he had not written,
the three
ultimate things in the world for him would
still have been
the pain of experience, the ecstatic
moments of memory,
and the perpetual task of analysis and
understanding. The